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Latin American Cities: From Subservient Reproductions to Intercontinental Dialogues

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Abstract: This paper investigates the circulation of ideas regarding the city among selected countries in Latin America. It discusses convergences between academic and scientific institutions and investigative weakness in partnerships between Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Colombia, and Mexico. It identifies two historical moments: one of vertical dialogues between Latin America and central countries in the elaboration of urban plans (20th century) and another of contemporary academic exchange signalling a horizontal dialogue that is fragile and sporadic but distinct from those observed in the past. Empirical reference is obtained from the analysis of scientific events and papers published by distinguished post-graduate programs concerning urban topics in selected countries, during the time frame of 2000–2015. The methodological approach is based on a bibliographic review and content analysis. Results indicate that the old “one-way” of transfer of urban planning ideas from central countries to Latin America is changing; slowly, the continent has been growing more independent in terms of knowledge creation and circulation.

Keywords: transfer of ideas; epistemology of urban studies; Latin American cities; knowledge network

1. Introduction

European countries, especially France, England, Germany, Austria, Spain and Switzerland, dominated the urban planning knowledge network for a long and continuous period, as one of many aspects of prolonged Euro-centered power (Quijano 2000). In the early 20th century, these countries were central references within a knowledge network that only much later would be questioned. A huge gap separated Latin America from Europe in terms of urban knowledge: the old continent had many more universities and research institutes, and also was in a stable post-industrialization and urbanization moment. European countries had either a strong cultural influence (such as France) or an economic impact (such as England) over their colonies or the recently emancipated countries of Latin America (Almandoz 2002). For a long and continuous period, our references were restricted to a limited geographical frame of central countries, and always submitted to hegemonic interpretations of facts. Because of this tradition, the knowledge network was restricted to vertical dialogues from centralities to peripheries—and little attention was given to an intra-continent exchange of knowledge.

After the 1920s, economic and demographic booming were happening in several cities of Latin America; making urban institutes and urban research a priority for local governments. In the beginning, universities and research institutes relied on foreigners’ contributions, especially for participation in urban plans—one of the many forms urban planning ideas can take. At that moment, the recently independent countries of Latin America were seeking new symbols for their capital cities, they wanted their progress to be displayed in them. Also, in Europe several city models were emerging—from the *Beaux Arts* monumental city, to the bucolic “Garden City”, and later, the functional modernist city. That

was the perfect combination for vertical dialogues to take place between them; and at that moment, urban plans were the main type of urban ideas transferred from Europe to Latin America because they convey fast and concrete shifts to the city form as most desired at that time (Ultramari et al. 2016).

But this one-way dialogue could not be sustained for long. Generations of local professionals begin to arise and create their own interpretations and ideas. Later, from 1970s onwards, Latin America's biggest cities were under an intense industrialization and urbanization process, leading to singular urban issues, and in proportions not yet experimented with before. Local governments, along with local specialists, started to create solutions fit to Latin American cities. City form is not the main concern anymore—infrastructure is indeed important to support city growth, but social and environmental issues were emerging rapidly and equally they needed attention. That amplified the array of urban planning ideas that began to be created and exchanged—now it is not only about urban plans, but also about legislations, programs, public policies, practices and much more. Also, cities from Latin America were living very similar urban issues due to the region's economic and social context, a reality that drifted apart from that of old centralities. Similar investigative approaches may also be found concerning cities in other ex-European colonies. For the scope of the dossier that this paper is part of, one important reference is that presented by Silva (2015). In his study of cities from Portuguese-speaking African countries, there is also a clear transformation of urban models to be adopted, from the colonial period to the independent one.

It is in consideration of that scenario that this paper proposes to understand whether horizontal dialogues between Latin American counterparts is now more valued and frequent; or if old traditions of considering central countries as gold standard for urban planning are still ongoing. Since Latin America's cities have a similar history and urban issues, it is expected that circulation of ideas between its countries should be more frequent. This paper discusses the understanding of when, how, and why ideas travel, are imposed, assimilated, or rejected, whether partly or holistically. We also address how those transfers are shaped in vertical or horizontal dialogues and in either contextualized or general ways. The transfer of urbanistic ideas is yet a topic not widely discussed, especially when analyzed by the perspective of peripheral countries, such as those of Latin America. The comprehension of how and why dialogues about urban planning take place is an important key to understanding Latin American urban history, as well as its present (Ultramari and Cantarim 2018).

This paper is divided into four parts. The first two parts discuss the circulation of ideas about city planning and its attributes regarding the geographical frame of interest: selected countries in Latin America. The third part presents an empirical study that examines the knowledge integration levels of selected countries, presuming that the analyzed scenario is indicative of wider susceptibilities. The last part presents final considerations and a brief discussion of new analytical perspectives.

2. Circulation of Ideas

The circulation of ideas regarding the city is understood to include management practices, guidelines, principles, legislation, projects, and urban plans; these ideas are potentialized by characteristics of their moments of inception and later by their positions in the flow of discourses.¹ Some factors may positively or negatively affect the qualitative aspects of individual, collective, or institutional production of ideas, such as political conditions, geopolitical interests, crises and economic growth, geographical characteristics, and available technologies. Under these conditions, there is an environment that is auspicious to creativity and more sensitive to unfamiliar situations. Regardless of whether the factors' magnitude can explain the circulation and appropriation of ideas, it is worth noting what they are in order to develop an understanding of our ideas, selves, and coincidences

¹ Adams (2019) is an important reference for further discussion this point. His book not only depicts the importance of the 19th-century European urbanistic ideas as a global reference but also proves the history of urban processes and the history of the circulation of ideas to be indistinguishable.

(Ortega and Gasset 1984). Such an understanding endorses the diversity of factors that can influence the constitution of facts, and also indicates a state of potential dissatisfaction towards attempts to apprehend it precisely.

In the contemporary globalized world, knowledge exchange occurs easily (see Tomlinson et al. 2010); urbanism practice and comprehension have yet to attain the specificity of tangibility and visibility of built (and altered) environments that contribute to a more pragmatic level of transfer of ideas in the form of lessons learned and good practices.

Regarding the Latin American frame, Delgado (2014) discusses a circulation of ideas in the shape of dialogues between local governments that seek hierarchical positions, urban competitiveness, and image, using a foundation of what has been already tested by his peers. The reproduction of ideas between cities also benefits from the operational and financial support of international agencies such as the United Nations and the World Bank (see United Nations 1996; World Bank 2015). In the Latin American context, those institutions provided guidelines, principles, and financial aid for urban solutions (in the World Bank's case).

Despite the contemporary scenario, a residual influence of what once existed in the beginning of urban studies in the continent remains under the influence of central countries.

In Scheingart's (2000) studies on the genesis of the Latin American urban question, he recognizes national particularities while highlighting the strong influence of countries such as France and the United States. In the same way, Kowarick (1994, p. 37) identified the non-existence of any linear relation between reality and knowledge production regarding the Latin American city. According to him, the most meaningful aspects are "the political conjunctures and the economic interests, the ideological debate that feeds, largely, [and] the migrations of ideas and of the intellectual fashions".²

The concept of the circulation of ideas is not yet universal. Several interpretations have been adopted by different fields of research; in those related to urban planning and public policies, some authors have constructed terms and interpretations that describe forms of circulation. Hoyt (2006) lists several: lesson-drawing, policy borrowing, policy shopping, policy band-wagoning, and systematically pinching ideas.

Healey and Upton (2010), with investigative interests in Anglo-Saxon countries, examine the concept of knowledge circuits and the importance of apprehending distinct forms of idea transmission. According to them, two forms can be identified: (1) ideas travel and are uncritically replicated somewhere else, which constitutes a cursory diffusionism created by centers of power (political, economic, or cultural); and (2) ideas travel and blend with local models and elements in reception cities, creating adapted interpretations, knowledge, practices, or even hybrid solutions.

Leme (2004) rejects the words "influence" and "transfer" in his research on the proliferation of urbanism in São Paulo, because the terms do not capture the complexity of that process and may feature only one specific aspect of it. To make up for this linguistic absence, he adopted the term "circulation" of ideas. Leme also identifies three attributes that support this concept of circulation: urbanism is a field that includes international movements that highlight the transference of key ideas; it is a field based on the exchange of experiences; and it reflects on institutional organizations and professional associations. Regardless of assuring singular exchanges, such attributes have limitations. In a study about good practices in developing countries' cities in Google environments, Tomlinson et al. (2010) reveal that this tool contributes to a generalization of hegemonic perspectives. Ironically, the most complete environment for the circulation of ideas would then be organized to limit access to an "alternative policy perspectives and debate, and that is not in the public interest" (Tomlinson et al. 2010, p. 174).

Contexts of the creation and reception of ideas constitute essential elements of their diffusion, acceptance, refusal, or consolidation; however, they are not elements capable of autonomous initiatives.

² In the original: "las coyunturas políticas y los intereses económicos, el debate ideológico que se alimenta, en gran parte, de las migraciones de ideas y de las modas intelectuales".

In order to understand the causal elements of these processes, many authors dedicate themselves to studying the material mobility of scientists or institutional representatives as a propulsion factor in the exchange of intellectual and scientific knowledge, compared to the actual migration of their own creations.

However, it is recognized that the materiality of specialists' travel is contextualized in myriad factors that are not clearly distinguishable, and investigative advance relies precisely on the comprehension of these factors. This point of view was defended by [Howlett and Morgan \(2011\)](#); specifically referencing urban planning and architecture, they qualify these concrete ideas regarding mobility between cultures in time and space as only one of many possible forms of the externalization of knowledge and practices.

Similarly, to [Healey and Upton \(2010\)](#), those two authors are also concerned with the methods by which the circulation of ideas may occur in more or less receptive or imposed manners. Models, metaphors, knowledge, and images can be partly or entirely transferred, at times preserving their original integrity (travelling with integrity) and at other times preserving their initial characteristics in terms of utility, but with new functions (travelling fruitfully). In all cases, we retain the idea, defined by [Coraggio \(1990\)](#) as not only a scientific effort but also a social construct that amplifies its meaning. In public policy discussions, [Weyland \(2004, 2005\)](#) observes the processes of diffusion and incorporation of ideas in fields different from those in which they were initially idealized and developed. In his analysis, he considers processes that can be characterized as vertical impositions from public agents and international organizations, as well as processes that are indicative of horizontal creative learning. This results in possible criticism of a developmental or aid agencies' role, international or not, because when acting at a local level, they may impose their own principles and practices, tie their own institutional aims as a condition to generate support, or, lastly, submit local interests to external perspectives.

Ideas are spread and consolidated not only because of their intrinsic value but also because of circumstantial aspects. These factors make the identification of causes and consequences more complex; the roots of idea circulation become hard to track and the same happens to its assimilation and oblivion. Paradoxically, these factors also instigate the comprehension of these processes, even if only partially and always qualified by further inquiries. In contemporary debates regarding the circulation of ideas, discussion about the distinctions between influence and inspiration, export and dialogue, and reproduction and adaption, constantly recur. Those distinct vectors reveal extremes between the imposition of finished ideas and enriching advances that can be transferred to new socioeconomic contexts. Considering our geographical frame, it seems that there is a hegemonic influence that prolongs the exporting and simple reproduction of ideas over a desired inspiration, dialogue, and adaption of knowledge already experimented with elsewhere. In the same way, there are subtle signs of a changing process in that scenario overruled by dialogical vertical connection, leading towards an increase of contextual value based on local realities and interests.

In literature focusing on the circulation of ideas, the consensus on the singularity of shape and speed that dialogues take in our time has consistently recurred. However, if globalization allows ideas to circulate in unprecedented ways due to possibilities of rapid, far-reaching transfer, then this universalization and speed may influence the nuance of transferred ideas over parts of a territory. Fragments of ideas would be assimilated into the overall framework of ideas in parts of the territory before being consolidated in homogeneous concepts because of the capability of replication and adaption of what was thought in external realities. This paper's frame of examination is founded upon these micro-realities; we distance ourselves from comparative debate and prioritize the so-called *histoire croisée* ([Werner and Zimmermann 2006](#)), valuing the relation between objects of study and their possible scales of analysis and categories of perception.

Similarities and distinctions within the Latin American urbanization process occur because of two processes: they developed under the influence of the same central countries and received their urban ideas, and, to a lesser degree, emerged because of an incipient horizontal dialogue. In the first case, we can highlight ideas that came from Europe, especially France, that were discussed or assimilated

from the 1900s onwards. For an analysis of the second case, this paper examines the recent academic production from selected Latin American countries. Presumably, evidence of change in intra- and extra-continental dialogues can be observed between those two moments. In both cases, we consider the obscure meaning of our object, the Latin American city. According to [Gorelik \(2005\)](#), the idea that the city is more clearly understood when we stand away from their concrete experience implies that it cannot be taken as an objective category that synthesizes the continent's diversity. We should, according to Gorelik's suggestion, understand it in a reverse way, not as an artificial ontology, but as something to be culturally constructed. Our analysis guides us to an agreement with that statement, and we present a further locus of inquiry: of explaining, partially, the reduced priority given to the discussion of this "city" as an investigative topic among our researchers and, hereby, the reduced dialogue between them.

In urban management literature, the investigative priority is the idea—with its intangibility—over its operational function or processes. There is also an ostensive preoccupation with graphic representation of the idea: according to [Jamett \(2009, p. 22\)](#), the urban idea would be an objective or subjective representation foundational to the visualization of the city, using images created by groups of power that are transmitted by technicians and professionals that "later designed and concretized this idea"³; [Muñoz \(1989\)](#) goes further and discusses the indistinct use of ideas and representation in the city's case. Upon investigation, the identification of reproduced ideas' origin and regions of reception are normally associated with dialogues between central countries and peripheral countries. Dialogues from other geographical frames constituted by horizontal relations that recognize particularities of different micro-realities are left to be further analyzed.

Specifically, within the context of the city and regardless of the analytic frame, the transfer of ideas is normally understood as a process capable of being reprised, assimilation, rejection, or the imposition of knowledge in the shape of plans, projects, directrices, policies, and practices. Despite the numerous ways that idea substantiation occurs within the transfer process, it still transmits a set of intentions that is determined by a group in political power, private or popular, respecting its own interests and creating a perspective of an ideal or desired city or model. Regarding the group in a position of power, [Peter Hall \(2011\)](#) talks about urbanists and their "arrogance"; [Foucault \(2008\)](#) classifies ideas and representations as public or private initiatives that seek to benefit those in power according to their own interests, confirming the relevance of control devices and knowledge creation by dominant social actors. [Parnreiter \(2011\)](#) retrospectively observes hegemonic intentions that become clearer after the turn of the 20th century, by the metropolis' power and consolidated by development agencies by the end of World War II.

During Latin American colonial times, the main exporting center of ideas was undoubtedly Europe. This fact, according to [Almandoz \(2004\)](#), held true even before its substantiation through urban historiography, which was born by the end of the 19th century and established as science only after the 1960s. In this way, Latin America's territory, although already officially independent, would become a laboratory of urbanistic ideas, as "something yet to be done" and propitious to the reproduction of hegemonic European urban knowledge.

An urban network proliferated, complex in its formulation and maintenance. [Müller \(2015, p. 193\)](#) reinforces this mode of analysis: "More recently, the knowledge network seemed to acquire as much importance as the idea itself. [...] this network would constitute the basis for the valuable replicability of initiatives among cities". In Latin America, the transfer of ideas between national entities is strongly observed at the level of political ideologies and public policies, especially as a reaction to a wider scenario or to vertical hierarchical relations with central countries. Regarding the economic history of Chile, [Valdés \(1995\)](#) emphasizes that observed changes happened because of "organized" transfers of certain concepts, and also because of the "training" of a new generation of economists and

³ In the original: "posteriormente diseñarán y concretarán esta idea".

academics. This, as well as the presence of new unterritorialized markets, means that the horizontal and intracontinental relations are not as consolidated as those between our continent and central countries. Valladares and Coelho (2000) certify that, despite the intentions of international conferences, the communication between Portuguese-speaking and Spanish-speaking countries in Latin America is still incipient. Also, those authors highlight the fact that “researchers normally work isolated in their own sub regions or countries. Continental networks of information do not exist, and research institutes and the postgraduate programs have little exchange among themselves”⁴ (Valladares and Coelho 2000, p. 8, free translation).

These ideas on the concept of circulation of ideas and on the occurrence of this phenomenon in the urban context and the authors discussing them are summarized in Figure 1.

Circulation of ideas: the Latin American context					
<p>The concept of the circulation of ideas is not yet universal. Several interpretations have been adopted by different fields, those are related to urban planning and public policies</p>	<p>Delgado (2014)</p> <p>dialogues between local governments that seek hierarchical positions, urban competitiveness, and image, using a foundation of what has been already tested by his peers.</p>	<p>Schteingart (2000)</p> <p>recognizes national particularities (in Latin America) while highlighting the strong influence of countries such as France and the United States</p>	<p>Kowarick (1994)</p> <p>identifies the nonexistence of any linear relation between reality and knowledge production regarding the Latin American city</p>	<p>Hoyt (2006)</p> <p>lists several forms of circulation such as lesson-drawing, policy borrowing, policy shopping, policy bandwagoning, and systematically pinching ideas</p>	
	<p>Healey e Upton (2010)</p> <p>the concept of knowledge circuits and the importance of apprehending distinct forms of idea transmission (replication and adaptation).</p>	<p>Leme (2004)</p> <p>three attributes of urban circulation of ideas: international movements highlight the transference of key ideas; the field is based on exchanges of experiences; reflects institutional organizations and professional associations.</p>	<p>Tomlinson et al. (2010)</p> <p>the most complete environment for the circulation of ideas would then be organized to limit access to an “alternative policy perspectives and debate, and that is not in the public interest” (p. 174)</p>	<p>Howlett & Morgan (2011)</p> <p>qualify concrete ideas (architecture and urban planning) regarding mobility between cultures in time and space as only one of many possible forms of the externalization of knowledge and practices</p>	<p>Coraggio (1990)</p> <p>the idea is not only a scientific effort but also a social construct that amplifies its meaning</p>
	<p>Weyland (2004; 2005)</p> <p>In public policy discussions, are processes of diffusion and incorporation of ideas in fields different from those in which they were initially idealized and developed</p>	<p>Werner & Zimmermann (2006)</p> <p>histoire croisée: valuing the relation between objects of study and their possible scales of analysis and categories of perception</p>	<p>Gorelik (2005)</p> <p>the city cannot be taken as an objective category that synthesizes the continent’s diversity</p>	<p>Jamett (2009)</p> <p>the urban idea is objective or subjective representation transmitted by technicians and professionals that “designed and concretized this idea”</p>	<p>Muñoz (1989)</p> <p>discussions about the indistinct use of ideas and representation in the city’s case</p>
	<p>Parnreiter (2011)</p> <p>hegemonic intentions become clearer after the turn of the 20th century, by the metropolis’ power and consolidated by development agencies by the end of WW II</p>	<p>Almandó (2004)</p> <p>Latin America’s territory, become a laboratory of urbanistic ideas, propitious to the reproduction of hegemonic European urban knowledge.</p>	<p>Müller (2015)</p> <p>“the knowledge network seemed to acquire as much importance as the idea itself. [...] this network would constitute the basis for the valuable replicability of initiatives among cities” (p. 193)</p>	<p>Valdés (1995)</p> <p>observed changes happened because of “organized” transfers of certain concepts, and also because of the “training” of a new generation of economists and academics</p>	<p>Valladares & Coelho (2000)</p> <p>despite the intents of international conferences, the communication between Portuguese speaking and Spanish speaking countries in Latin America are still incipient</p>

Figure 1. The construction of the circulation of ideas concept in the Latin American context.

In this frail Latin American horizontal dialogue, it is possible to observe the prioritization of comparative studies in academic practices, which is important because of their intrinsic characteristics, while there are few discussions about a “broader world” that incorporates analyzed fragments. If advances exist in terms of case studies between cities and national public policies in Latin America

⁴ In the original: “los investigadores tienden a trabajar aislados en su subregión o país. No existen redes continentales de información y los institutos de investigaciones y los programas de postgrado mantienen entre sí muy escasos intercambios”.

or, at least, if there are favorable conditions for these cooperative case studies to be undertaken, they remain deficient in the amplified analysis at continental level. The so-called micro history emphasizes the contingent and autonomy of specific cultures, what partially explains the fragmentation of a long narrative of Latin American urban historiography (Almandoz 2003). This investigative option and imposition are the topic of the next section.

3. Investigative Gaps in Latin American Urban Studies

Latin America's territory has been recurrently qualified as one of rapid urbanization because of its demographic growth and internal migrations. This process is strongly characterized by the generalized bareness of rural spaces due to the population's migration to cities within specific locations of national territories (removed for peer review). Regardless of countries' particularities, it is possible to identify a Latin American context in terms of urbanization and scientific and public policy interests, confirmed by the phenomena's chronology and research profiles in their respective countries.

Valladares and Coelho (2000) affirm that urban investigation inside the continent has been evolving systematically, but irregularly, since the 1970s within Latin American territories. Not only is the level and quality of urban research unbalanced when comparing selected countries, but the dialogue between its academic bodies and public management institutions is as well. Sebastián (2000) addresses this situation among Spanish-speaking countries, but he alerts readers to quality issues and to the punctual character of this dialogue between parts of the continent.

The high intensity of cooperation does not correspond to an adequate integration in strategic objectives and institutional strengthening. In general, this multitude of activities has a punctual and dispersed character, which question not the quantity, but the quality of the cooperation. (Sebastián 2000, para. 1, free translation)⁵

The constitution of scientific research, or even the experiences exchanged about city management in peripheral countries, still primarily occur in a unidirectional dialogue with central countries, to the detriment of rich relations among countries with similar contemporary and historical realities. In Latin America's framework, paradoxically, the dialogue often seems to be reinforced outside its national borders, by the means of North American or European research institutions on the continent. Examining the extraterritoriality of Latin American debate is a difficult task; several cases illustrate that. The Latin American Studies Association/LASA, one of the largest associations of individuals and institutions dedicated to research on the continent, has the majority (40%) of its members living in United States (LASA Latin American Studies Association). The Latin American Network Information Center (LANIC Latin American Network Information Center) is currently linked to the University of Texas; the center was created in 1992 and remains one of the contemporary research institutions that focus on Latin America. Its data bank has a list of active institutions that are mainly located in central countries, as shown Table 1. According to LANIC (Latin American Network Information Center), there are 17 associations and organizations, 5 institutional directories, 11 programs and independent institutions, and 25 centers of Latin American studies within North American universities, and 17 centers of studies outside the United States.

The list above outlines the fact that most institutions involved with Latin America as a unit and topic of study are located in central countries, even those that are individual research initiatives. The United States has the biggest conglomeration of academic institutes (26), followed by Europe (14). There are only three institutes listed in LANIC that are not located in the USA or Europe: one each in Mexico, Costa Rica, and Brazil.

⁵ In the original: "La alta intensidad de la cooperación no se corresponde con una adecuada integración en objetivos estratégicos y en el fortalecimiento institucional. En general esta multitud de actividades tiene un carácter puntual y disperso, que ponen en duda no la cantidad, sino la calidad de la cooperación" (Sebastián 2000, para. 1).

Table 1. Academic institutions with Latin American investigative frame.

Associations and Organizations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Asociación Latinoamericana de Sociología/ALAS 2. Brazilian Studies Association/BRASA 3. Canadian Association for Latin American and Caribbean Studies/CALACS 4. Caribbean Studies Association CSA 5. Conference of Latin American Geographers/CLAG 6. Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales/CLACSO 7. Consortium of Latin American Studies Programs/CLASP 8. Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales/FLACSO 9. Guatemalan Scholars Network 10. Latin American Jewish Studies Association/LAJSA 11. Latin American Studies Association/LASA 12. Red Iberoamericana de Investigadores sobre Globalización y Territorio/RII 13. Red Latinoamericana de Investigadores sobre Teoría Urbana/RELATEUR 14. Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials/SALALM 15. Sociedad Interamericana de Planificación/SIAP 16. Society for Caribbean Studies/SCS 17. Society for Latin American Studies/SLAS
Institutional Directories	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Latin American Studies Member Institutions Directory/CLASP 2. Latin American and Caribbean Studies Centers Directory compiled by the International Institute, Univ. of Michigan 3. LASA's Directory of LAS Programs Database 4. National Resource Centers on Latin America and the Caribbean, 2014–2017 5. Recursos Europeos sobre América Latina en Internet/REDIAL
Independent Programs or Institutions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Florida International University Latin American and Caribbean Center 2. Stanford University Center for Latin American Studies 3. Tulane University Roger Thayer Stone Center for Latin American Studies 4. University of California, Los Angeles Latin American Institute 5. University of Florida Center for Latin American Studies 6. University of Georgia Latin American and Caribbean Studies Institute 7. University of Michigan Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies 8. University of New Mexico Latin American and Iberian Institute 9. University of Pittsburgh Center for Latin American Studies 10. University of Texas at Austin Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies 11. Vanderbilt University Center for Latin American Studies
Academic Consortia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Colombia University Institute of Latin American Studies and 2. New York University Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies 3. Duke University Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies 4. University of North Carolina Institute for the Study of the Americas 5. University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies 6. University of Chicago Center for Latin American Studies 7. University of Utah Latin American Studies e Brigham Young University Latin American Studies 8. University of Wisconsin, Madison Latin American, Caribbean and Iberian Studies Program 9. University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies
Centers of Latin American Studies with North American Universities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. American University Center for Latin American and Latino Studies 2. Boston College Program in Latin American Studies 3. Brown University Center for Latin American Studies 4. City University of New York Center for Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies 5. Cornell University Latin American Studies Program 6. Georgetown University Center for Latin American Studies 7. Harvard University, David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies 8. Hunter College, CUNY Latin American and Caribbean Studies 9. Indiana University Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies 10. Michigan State University Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies 11. New Mexico State University Center for Latin American Studies and Border Studies 12. New York University Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies 13. Notre Dame Kellogg Institute Latin American Studies Program 14. Princeton University Program in Latin American Studies 15. San Diego State University Center for Latin American Studies 16. State Univ. of New York, Stony Brook Latin American and Caribbean Studies Center

Table 1. Cont.

	17. University of California, San Diego Center for Iberian and Latin American Studies 18. University of California, Santa Barbara Latin American and Iberian Studies 19. University of California, Santa Cruz Latin American and Latino Studies 20. University of Connecticut Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies 21. University of Illinois at Chicago Latin American and Latino Studies 22. University of Maryland Latin American Studies Center 23. Univ. of Massachusetts at Amherst Center for Latin American, Caribbean and Latino Studies 24. University of Southern California Latin American Studies Initiativ 25. University of Washington, Seattle Latin American Studies Program
Centers of Latin American Studies outside the US	1. Asociación Euro-Americana de Estudios de Desarrollo Económico/AAE (Spain) 2. Centre for Latin American Research and Documentation/CEDLA (Holanda) 3. Centro Coordinador y Difusor de Estudios Latinoamericanos/CCyDEL-UNAM (Mexico) 4. Freie Universität Berlin Lateinamerika-Institut 5. Ibero-American Institute/IAI, Berlin 6. Ibero-America Institute for Economic Research University of Göttingen (Germany) 7. Institut für Iberoamerika-Kunde Deutsches Übersee-Institut 8. Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica Instituto de Estudios Latinoamericanos/IDELA 9. UFRS, Instituto Latino-americano de Estudos Avançados/ILEA (Brazil) 10. University of Birmingham Department of Hispanic Studies 11. University of Bristol Department of Hispanic, Portuguese and Latin America 12. University of Calgary Latin American Studies Program 13. University of Helsinki Intercultural and Bilingual Education in Latin America/IBE 14. University of Liverpool Institute of Latin American Studies 15. University of London, School of Advanced Study Institute of Latin American Studies 16. University of Oxford Latin American Centre 17. York University Latin American and Caribbean Studies

Source: Adapted from ([LANIC Latin American Network Information Center](#)).

This scenario, as one can expect, is far from ideal. [Carvalho \(2010\)](#) has presented the longstanding desire of national agents to be protagonists of their own dialogues and academic production about Latin America. The causes and consequences of the current state of extracontinental knowledge production are widely criticized over the quantitative aspects of production and the qualitative aspects of Latin American initiatives. Beyond the fact that institutions dedicated to act as information databases about the continent are scarce within its territory, these institutions are primarily focused in research at national or micro-regional levels, with fractal characteristics and in formal limits of Latin America; this reinforces the lack of discussion about superior and continental processes that happens in Latin American territory. In fact, there seems to be a more intensive focus on matters within the continent than on the continent in its entirety, with indications of a scientific subjection to central models.

[...] our educational institutions produce a rupture with the projects founded on the paradigms of the liberal and scholastic university, outside the knowledge and needs of our communities, an epistemological matrix that the European colonial expansion imposed and transplanted to our continent. ([Espasande 2014](#), para. 3, free translation)⁶

Regarding the exchange of public policies between Latin American cities, there are signs of a new continental dialogue, suggesting the transfer of ideas by means of governmental institutes' initiatives. In a context where policies of income transfer were implemented in Latin American countries from the 1900s to 2000s ([Leite and Peres 2013](#)), local cities' governments experimented with reproducing

⁶ In the original: "[...] nuestras instituciones educativas produzcan una ruptura con los proyectos fundados en los paradigmas de la universidad liberal y escolástica, ajena a los saberes y necesidades de nuestras comunidades, una matriz epistemológica que la expansión colonial europea impuso y trasplantó a nuestro continente".

those initiatives with some singularity, always basing these initiatives in financial redistribution to lower-income populations or prioritizing them in infrastructure, housing, and public service programs. The transfer of public policies inside the continent does not only rely on local government, but also on multilateral organizations such as the World Bank, for which “fighting poverty and income inequality has been perceived as a requirement to economic and social development of countries”⁷ (Leite and Peres 2013, p. 2, free translation). In the same way that neoliberal policies have inspired a great number of dialogues in Latin America regarding the privatization of infrastructure among its cities since the beginning of the 1900s (and also with multilateral agencies’ assistance), it is also possible to identify, more recently, a continental unit regarding other principles. Studies about the role of consulting companies and housing markets in the continent have shown that they might have contributed substantially to a deeper exchange of ideas in terms of plans, projects, commercial, and construction aspects; this may be especially true in Brazilian cities, although further investigation is required to confirm this.

We believe that a dialogue between the governments of Latin American cities exists, certainly facilitated by language and geographical proximity; however, this dialogue seems to be driven by an extra-continental interest in Latin American cases. Such is the case of Curitiba’s BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) system and urban planning, Brazil; the social impact interventions in Medellín, Colombia; the participatory budget in Porto Alegre, Brazil; and the social housing proposals in Santiago, Chile. Contrary to this contemporary scenario, in the early 20th century, the United Kingdom and Germany were two of the main exporting centralities regarding ideas about the city at a global level. Segre (2009, p. 93) suggests that this influence of the same central countries over Latin America made it possible to talk about a “certain homogeneity that characterized functional and aesthetic transformations of Latin American cities, with no precise coincidence in temporal dynamics”⁸ (free translation). This same author highlights the singularity of France’s generalized influence in Latin America for quite a long period, initiated at the beginning of the century by Joseph Bouvard in Argentina and Brazil, and later by Marcel Poëte, the last academic visitor from *Institut d’Urbanisme de Paris*.

In the above cases, the dialogue was imposed by a central model, confirming the understanding that flows of ideas are designed after “linear and singular models of development pathways, the ‘modernization’ myth,” as described by Healey (2011, p. 188); they are capable of intentionally connecting local initiatives to scenarios considered to be “far from modernity’s ideal”. Gutiérrez (1989) synthesizes this situation in a critical way, not only regarding adopted urbanistic projects, but also problematic issues that make the transfer of ideas between the continent’s countries more difficult.

One of the essential modalities of dependence is the issuance of knowledge of one’s own and it becomes the fostered inferiority complex that implies disregarding ours and raising the foreigner. The dialectic of the equation “European civilization-barbaric/Spain-America” made us unarmed to this category of nineteenth-century thought where the magic words of “progress” and “modernity” devastated the Latin American cultural defenses. [...] One of the paths of thought adopted to destroy the cultural base was to deny reality and to start from *modelística*. (Gutiérrez 1989, p. 257, free translation)⁹

⁷ In the original: “combate à pobreza e à desigualdade de renda passou a ser percebido como pré-requisito para o desenvolvimento econômico e social dos países”.

⁸ In the original: “Certa homogeneidade que caracterizou as transformações funcionais e estéticas das cidades na América Latina, sem coincidir exatamente na dinâmica temporal”.

⁹ In the original: “Una de las modalidades esenciales de la dependencia es la emisión del conocimiento de lo propio y ella deviene del complejo de inferioridad fomentado que implica despreciar el nuestro y ensalzar el foráneo. La dialéctica de la ecuación “civilización Europea-barbarle/España-América” nos entregó inermes a esta categoría de pensamiento decimonónico donde las palabras mágicas del “progreso” y la “modernidad” arrasaban las defensas culturales americanas. [...] Uno de los caminos del pensamiento adoptados para destruir la base cultural fue el negar la realidad y partir de la modelística”.

Petti Pinheiro (2012) identifies another form of transfer of urban ideas at the beginning of the 20th century: specialized institutional organizations, congresses, publications, and manuals. Some examples are journals such as *Der Städtebau* (German), *Musée Social de Paris* (French), and the first international congress of urbanism organized by the *Royal Institute of British Architects* and the *Institut d'Urbanisme de Paris*.

Those channels were essential for the circulation of ideas in the first half of the 20th century; they distinguished themselves clearly by what may still be observed today: a scenario of intense social movements, with a substantial number of idea interlocutors, and an increasingly clouded identification of reasons and places of origin of ideas. We want primarily to address the point of how far we are from a desirable scenario in terms of circulation and comprehension of ideas between selected Latin American countries. The data selection presented in the next section constitutes the initial base for this paper's study case.

4. Academic Convergences in the Study of the Latin American City

There are similarities in colonial processes, culture, and language between Latin American countries, especially those that constitute Ibero-America. In addition to these convergences, there also exist barriers capable of diminishing intellectual exchanges among them, suggesting the existence of investigative gaps.

Despite the substantial space given to the discussion related to city and urbanism history, in the last two decades, in Brazilians researchers' agenda, especially in those associated with architecture and urbanism, some important gaps persist that only recently have started being approached. One of those is with regard to the history of intellectual exchange and circulation of ideas in Latin America (or more specifically, in South America), although many common aspects exist between urbanistic experiences of several countries in the continent. (Gomes 2009, p. 7, free translation)¹⁰

To begin this discussion about possible convergences and barriers in the dialogue and transfer of ideas about the city in selected countries of Latin America, this section presents the results of a case study with two analytical perspectives: one that is based on relevant national events in urban and regional planning/cities and another that is based on high-ranking postgraduate programs according to their national qualification categorization along with adherence with urban and regional planning/cities. The selection of events and post-graduate programs that we present in this paper (see Table 2) was based on surveys and events' classifications by national agencies of post-graduation improvement. The final edition of those scientific events was analyzed in an attempt to understand how present the participation and dialogue with foreign nations is.

One interesting fact about the selection of academic events in Latin America is the notable difficulty finding data on publications and meetings, including the names of authors and other participants. In some cases, even after contacting the events' organizers by e-mail or telephone, we were still unable to obtain the information we sought. In this way, there seems to be a barrier of knowledge inaccessibility regarding discussion about urban and regional planning/cities in the continent. The events presented are exclusively organized by national institutions, since we aimed to identify interests for the "other" from the national-level perspective; thus, international events were not excluded from this analysis.

¹⁰ In the original: "Apesar do grande espaço que as discussões relativas à história da cidade e do urbanismo ganharam, nas duas últimas décadas, na pauta dos pesquisadores brasileiros, notadamente daqueles vinculados à área de arquitetura e urbanismo, persistem algumas importantes lacunas que só mais recentemente vêm sendo enfrentadas. Uma delas diz respeito à história das trocas intelectuais e da circulação de ideias no âmbito latino-americano (ou mais especificamente sul-americano), não obstante existem muitos pontos em comum entre as experiências urbanísticas de diversos países do continente".

Table 2. Reference events in urban and regional planning/cities in selected countries of Latin America (past eight editions).

Country	Event and Conducting Institution	Creation Year/Periodicity
Brazil	National Meeting of National Association of Urban and Regional Post-graduate and Research Programs (<i>Encontro Nacional da Associação Nacional de Pós-graduação e Pesquisa em Planejamento Urbano e Regional</i>)/ANPUR	1986/Biennial
	Seminar on the History of Urbanism and the City (<i>Seminário de História da Cidade e do Urbanismo</i>)/IPPUR, PROURB (UFRJ), PPGAU (UFF), PPGDT (UFRRJ), UERJ ¹¹	1988/Biennial
Argentina	Argentine Congress of Public Administration (<i>Congreso Argentino de Administración Pública</i>)/AAEAP	2001/Biennial
	Seminar on Urban Policies, Territorial and Environmental Management for Local Development (<i>Seminario de Políticas Urbanas, Gestión Territorial y Ambiental para el Desarrollo Local</i>)/IPUR-BAT ¹²	2007/Biennial
Colombia	National Seminar on Regional and Urban Research (<i>Seminario Nacional de Investigación Regional y Urbana</i>)/ACIUR ¹³	1993/No defined
	Colloquium INJAVIU ¹⁴ (<i>Colóquio INJAVIU</i>)/Pontificia Universidad Javeriana	2007/No defined
Mexico	Meeting of the National Urban Research Network (<i>Encuentro de la Red Nacional de Investigación Urbana</i>)/RNIU	1987/Annual
	National Meeting on Regional Development in Mexico (<i>Encuentro Nacional sobre el Desarrollo Regional en México</i>)/AMECIDER ¹⁵	1995/Annual
Chile	Seminar of the Territory in Detail (<i>Seminario del Territorio al Detalle</i>)/Universidad de Talca	2007/Annual
	Urban Design Meetings (<i>Encuentros de Diseño Urbano</i>)/Red Académica de Diseño Urbano READU	2011/Annual

Source: (Produced by the authors).

Regarding the selection of post-graduate programs, the main obstacle was finding enough programs within the desired scientific field and with adequate qualifications according to national ranking in each selected country. Our initial goal was to have at least four selected programs in each country, but that proved impossible without changing the selection criteria. Brazil was the only country in which we were able to find more than four post-graduate programs in the desired field with sufficient rankings;

¹⁵ AMECIDER: *Asociación Mexicana de Ciencias para el Desarrollo Regional* [Mexican Association of Sciences for Regional Development].

¹⁴ INJAVIU: *Instituto Javeriano de Vivienda y Urbanismo* [Javerian Institute of Housing and Urbanism].

¹³ AIUR: *Asociación Colombiana de Investigadores Urbano Regionales* [Colombian Association of Regional Urban Researchers].

¹² IPUR-BAT: *Instituto de Planeamiento Urbano y Regional* [Institute of Urban and Regional Planning]—BAT—Brian Alejandro Thomson.

¹¹ IPPUR: *Instituto de Pesquisa e Planejamento Urbano e Regional* [Institute of Urban and Regional Planning and Research] of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro; PROURB (UFRJ): *Programa de Pós-Graduação Em Urbanismo* [Postgraduate Program in Urban Planning] of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro; PPGAU (UFF): *Programa de Pós-Graduação em Arquitetura e Urbanismo* [Postgraduate Program in Architecture and Urbanism] of the Federal Fluminense University; PPGDT (UFPR): *Programa de Pós-Graduação em Desenvolvimento Territorial e Políticas Públicas* [Postgraduate Program in Territorial Development and Public Policies] of the Federal University of Paraná; UERJ: University of the State of Rio de Janeiro.

for the remaining countries, we had to extend our criteria to other fields related to social sciences. These programs were included as long as they had ongoing research about urban issues. Some programs were excluded from our frame because they did not have sufficient available data, even if they fit our primary criteria; this was the case of a post-graduate program in Regional Development (Universidade Regional de Blumenau, grade 5) and a post-graduate program in Regional Development and Agrobusiness (Universidade Estadual do Oeste do Paraná, grade 5). Selected programs are displayed in Table 3.

One factor that we aimed to observe is the internationalization level of those scientific events and post-graduation programs. To do so, we analyzed the authors' countries of origin (events) and the geographical frame discussed in dissertations (post-graduate programs). The results offer clues that help understand the dialogue and knowledge integration between Latin American countries (see Table 4). We chose to break down location into the following categories: local country, colonization country (shares same language and cultural bonds), the three segments of the Americas, and others. As expected, foreign contributions were made primarily from the Americas or from the once-colonizing country of the event's location.

We can observe that the integration level between Latin American countries is inexpressive, except for the Colombian events INJAVIU and ACIUR and the Chilean event *Seminário del Território al Detalle*. For the remaining events, the percentage of national authors is usually above 90% of participants; however, it is important to keep in mind that the information or publications regarding most of those events are not available online, which makes them more isolated in terms of knowledge circulation.

It is possible that, regarding those scientific arenas, there are no signs of consistent horizontal dialogues among selected countries or even a significant improvement in that matter over the analyzed span of years. On the other hand, the analysis of post-graduate programs seems to signal a more positive continental interaction. Based on preliminary results, there is a praxis of eventual interests in intracontinental urban issues between post-graduate programs; there is a reasonable amount of research that discusses questions that are not only focused on the reality of its country of origin, but also in a broader frame of Latin America.

Table 5 outlines selected post-graduate programs by country of analysis, total dissertations, and virtual interests in national or international topics of each program. Our temporal frame of reference is 2000–2015. We also tried to identify the country of origin of doctoral candidates in an attempt to understand how internationalized these programs are, but most programs unfortunately do not keep enough consistent data to substantiate that mode of analysis. Considering Brazilian post-graduate programs, a general analysis based in that time frame showed that approximately 5% of doctoral candidates were foreigners.

In a generalized way, results reveal that dialogue in post-graduate programs is more consistent between countries that are near each other, especially among those that share borders. Few exceptions exist to this rule; one exception is Mexico, but even though academic production from this country maintains a significant dialogue with the United States and South America, the same does not apply for its Central American counterparts. Post-graduate programs in Colombia exhibit higher international integration, repeating the same scenario observed in its scientific events; three analyzed programs have a more significant level of internationalization. In all countries, there is a notably low frequency of studies that pay precipitous attention to the Latin American context in a broader form.

Firstly, it seems that an imbalance exists in terms of the level and consolidation of post-graduate programs in selected countries, or at least in the institutes responsible for ranking them. Even after broadening the initial criteria of selection to all social sciences, the number of high-ranking programs in some countries was still very low (Colombia, Argentina, and Mexico). Further investigation, perhaps by means of sample reviews or bibliometric analyses, on those data could be carried out by applying more variables that could confirm a more consistent or frail academic and scientific dialogue between parts of Latin America. Such extended procedures could indicate not only if there are reduced signs of a possible intra-continent integration, but also if that fact is concomitant with shifts in forms of dialogues with central countries.

Table 3. Selection of post-graduation program in urban and regional planning/cities in selected countries of Latin America.

	Program/University	Grade
Brazil	Postgraduate in Urban and Regional Planning/Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro	6
	Postgraduate in Urban and Regional Planning/Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul	6
	Postgraduate in Urban Management/Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Paraná	5
	Postgraduate in Regional Development/Universidade de Santa Cruz do Sul	5
	Postgraduate in Urban Development/Universidade Federal de Pernambuco	5
Argentina	Doctorate in Geography/Universidad Nacional del Sur	A
	Doctorate in Social Sciences/Universidad Nacional de Cuyo	A
	Doctorate in Social Anthropology/Universidad Nacional de Misiones	A
	Doctorate in Anthropology/Univesidad de Buenos Aires	A
	Doctorate in Geography/Universidade Nacional de Cuyo	B
	Doctorate in Geography/Univesidad de Buenos Aires	B
Colombia	Doctorate in Public Administration and Public Policy/Universidad Nacional de Córdoba	B
	Doctorate in Anthropology/Universidad Nacional de Colombia	Accredited
	Doctorate in History/Universidad Nacional de Colombia	Accredited
	Doctorate in Anthropology/Universidad de los Andes	Reaccredited
Mexico	Doctorate in Political Sciences/Universidad de los Andes	Reaccredited
	Doctorate in Social Sciences with Specialization in Regional Studies/El Colegio de la Frontera Norte	International Competence
	Doctorate in Social Science with a Mention in Sociology/El Colegio de Mexico, A.C.	International Competence
	Doctorate in Social Anthropology/El Colegio de Michoacan, A.C.	International Competence
	Doctorate in Sociology/Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla	Consolidated
	Doctorate in Geography/Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México	Consolidated
Chile	Doctorate in Political and Social Sciences/Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México	Consolidated
	Doctorate in Architecture and Urban Studies/Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile	Accredited 5 years
	Doctorate in Anthropology/Universidad Católica del Norte –Universidad de Tarapacá	Accredited 6 years
	Doctorate in Political Sciences/Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile	Accredited 4 years
	Doctorate in Sociology/Universidad Alberto Hurtado	Accredited 5 years
	Doctorate in Social Sciences/Universidad de Chile	Accredited 4 years
	Doctorate in History/Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile	Accredited 7 years

Source: (Produced by the authors).

Table 4. Country of origin of authors in selected scientific events in selected countries of Latin America.

BRAZIL	National Meeting of National Association of Urban and Regional Post-graduate and Research Programs/ENANPUR, 2001–2015	Origin Country	2001	2003	2005	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015
		Brazil	99%	99.9%	99.4%	99.6%	99%	98.3%	97.6%	99.2%
		South America	1%	1.7%	0.3%	-	0.4%	1.7%	2.1%	0.7%
		Central America	-	-	-	-	0.2%	-	-	-
		North America	-	-	0.3%	-	0.2%	-	-	-
		Portugal	-	-	-	0.3%	-	-	-	-
	Others	-	-	0.3%	-	0.2%	-	0.2	-	
	Seminar on the History of Urbanism and the City/SHCU, 2000–2014	Origin Country	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	2014
		Brazil	96.6%	97.6%	97.5%	100%	97.5%	96.8%	98.5%	99.5%
		South America	3.4%	-	0.5%	-	2.5%	2.1%	1.0%	-
Central America		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
North America		-	-	2.0%	-	-	-	-	-	
Portugal		-	-	-	-	-	1.05%	-	-	
Others	-	2.4%	0.3%	-	-	-	0.5%	0.5%		
ARGENTINA	Argentine Association of Public Administration Studies/AEAP, 2001–2013	Origin Country	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014 *	2015 *
		Argentina	98.0%	98.0%	100%	97.0%	97.0%	99.0%	*	*
		South America	2.0%	-	-	3.0%	2.5%	0.5%	*	*
		Central America	-	-	-	-	-	0.5%	*	*
		North America	-	1.0%	-	-	0.5%	-	*	*
		Spain	-	1.0%	-	-	-	-	*	*
	Others	-	-	-	-	-	-	*	*	
Institute of Urban and Regional Planning Brian Alejandro Thomson/IPUR-BAT, 2007–2015	Origin Country	2007	2008	2009	2011	2013	2015			
Argentina	100%	100%	98%	97.0%	97.4%	95.2%				
South America	-	-	-	1.0%	0.85%	1.9%				
Central America	-	-	-	-	-	0.5%				
North America	-	-	2%	1.0%	1.7%	1.9%				
Spain	-	-	-	1.0%	-	-				
Others	-	-	-	-	-	0.9%				
COLOMBIA	Colombian Association of Regional Urban Researchers/ACIUR, 2001–2013	Origin Country	2009	2011	2012	2014				
		Colombia	92.2%	85.8%	68.0%	89%				
		South America	4.2%	9.6%	20.7%	8.2%				
		Central America	-	-	0.7%	-				
		North America	3.6%	3.0%	9.5%	2.7%				
		Spain	-	-	-	-				
	Others	-	0.6%	1.0%	-					
	Javerian Institute of Housing and Urbanism/INJAVIU, 2007–2015	Origin Country	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2013	2015	
		Colombia	100%	92%	30%	46.7%	45.4%	49.6%	92%	
		South America	-	8%	46%	35.1%	41.6%	31.2%	-	
Central America		-	-	12%	1.9%	2.8%	0.6%	-		
North America		-	-	10%	16.2%	11.2%	18.0%	-		
Spain	-	-	-	-	-	0.6%	-			
Others	-	-	2.0%	-	-	-	8%			

Table 4. Cont.

	Origin Country	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	
MEXICO	Urban Research Network/RNIU, 2008–2015	Mexico	98.2%	95.6%	89%	98.9%	94.4%	100%	100%	*
		South America	3.8%	2.4%	11%	1.1%	2.9%	-	-	*
		Central America	-	0.4%	-	-	-	-	-	*
		North America	-	0.8%	-	-	-	-	-	*
		Spain	-	0.4%	-	-	2.5%	-	-	*
		Others	-	0.4%	-	-	-	-	-	*
	Mexican Association of Sciences for Regional Development/AMECIDER, 2008–2015	Mexico	98.8%	98.6%	100%	97.2%	97.6%	100%	100%	97.5%
		South America	1.2%	1.4%	-	2.8%	2.4%	-	-	2.5%
		Central America	-	0.4%	-	-	-	-	-	-
		North America	-	0.8%	-	-	-	-	-	-
Spain		-	0.4%	-	-	2.5%	-	-	-	
Others		-	0.4%	-	-	-	-	-	-	
CHILE	<i>Seminário del Territorio al Detalle/Universidad de Talca, 2008–2015</i>	Chile	33%	33%	-	-	-	-	-	-
		South America	67%	50%	100%	100%	67%	67%	67%	100%
		Central America	-	-	-	-	33%	33%	-	-
		North America	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		Spain	-	-	-	-	-	-	33%	-
		Others	-	17%	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Urban Design Meetings/Red Académica de Diseño Urbano READU, 2011–2015	Chile	91%	93%	-	96%	87%	-	-	-
		South America	-	-	-	2%	7%	-	-	-
		Central America	-	-	-	-	3%	-	-	-
		North America	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Spain		1%	7%	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Others	-	-	-	2%	3%	-	-	-		

Source: (Produced by the authors). Note: * Non existing event or no available information online.

Table 5. Geographical frame (countries) adopted in dissertations of chosen post-graduation programs in selected countries.

	Program	Defended Theses	Country/Geographical Context
BRAZIL	Postgraduate in Urban and Regional Planning/UFRJ	88% Brazil 12% Others	Total (103): Brazil (92); Bolivia (3); Colombia (2); Argentina (1); Canada (1); Latin America (2); Brazil and Argentina (1); Brazil, Colombia and Spain (1)
	Postgraduate in Urban and Regional Planning/UFGRS	91% Brazil 9% Others	Total (33): Brazil (30); Brazil, Spain and Marocco (1); Brazil and Uruguay (1)
	Postgraduate in Urban Management/PUCPR	70% Brazil 30% Others	Total (16): Brazil (11); Spain (1); Brazil and Chile (1); Brazil and Colombia (1); Australia, Greece and China (1)
	Postgraduand in Regional Development/USCS	93% Brazil 7% Others	Total (59): Brazil (57); Brazil and Paraguay (1); Brazil and Argentina (1); Brazil and Portugal (1); Brazil and Uruguay (1)
	Postgraduate in Urban Development/UFPE	100% Brazil	Total (45): Brazil (45)
ARGENTINA	Doctorate in Geography/UNS	100% Argentina	Total (44): Argentina (44)
	Doctorate in Geography/UNCuyo	79% Argentina 11% Others	Total (14): Argentina (11); Chile (3)
	Doctorate in Geography/UBA	88% Argentina 12% Others	Total (17): Argentina (15); Brazil (1); Colombia (1)
	Doutorado em Ciências Sociais/UNCuyo	90% Argentina 10% Others	Total (29): Argentina (26); Chile and Reino Unido (1); Latin America (2)
	Doctorate in Social Anthropology/UNM	79% Argentina 11% Others	Total (14): Argentina (11); Argentina and Paraguay (1); Paraguay (1); Brazil (1)
COLOMBIA	Doctorate in Political Sciences/Universidad de los Andes	89% Colombia 11% Others	Total (133): Colombia (118); Latin America (2); United States (1); Afghanistan (1); Northern Ireland (1); Colombia and Mexico (1); Colombia and Ecuador (1); Colombia and Chile (1); Colombia and United States (4); Colombia and Spain (1); Colombia, Mexico and Democratic Republic of the Congo (1); Colombia, United States and Canada (1)
	Doctorate in Anthropology/Universidad de los Andes	97% Colombia 3% Others	Total 199: Colombia (194); United States (1); Peru (3); Venezuela (1)
	Doctorate in Anthropology/Universidad Nacional da Colombia	100% Colombia	Total 38: Colombia (38)
	Doctorate in History/Universidad Nacional da Colombia	92% Colombia 8% Others	Total 73: Colombia (67); Brazil (2); Venezuela (1); Colombia, Peru and Brazil (1); Colombia and Venezuela (1)

Table 5. Cont.

	Program	Defended Theses	Country/Geographical Context
MEXICO	Doctorate in Social Sciences/El Colegio de la Frontera Norte	95% Mexico 5% Others	Total 39: Mexico (37); United States (2)
	Doctorate in Sociology/Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla	93% Mexico 7% Others	Total 27: Mexico (25); Latin America (2); Guatemala (1)
	Doctorate in Social Science/El Colegio de México	74% Mexico 26% Others	Total 76: Mexico (56); Argentina (4); Colombia (5); Chile (2); Bolivia (1); Costa Rica (2); Guatemala (2); Haiti (1); United States (1); Latin America (1); Mexico and Spain (1)
	Doctorate in Geography/Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México	94% Mexico 6% Others	Total 17: Mexico (16); United States (1)
	Doctorate in Political and Social Sciences/Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.	65% Mexico 35% Others	Total 26: Mexico (17); United States (3); European Union (1); Mexico and United States (1); Mexico and Canada (1); Mexico and Italy (1); Mexico and Spain (1); Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, Italy and Russia (1)
	Doctorate in Social Anthropology/El Colegio de México.	65% Mexico 35% Others	Total 17: Mexico (15); Mexico and United States (1); Mexico and Spain (1)
CHILE	Doctorate in Architecture and Urban Studies/Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile	97% Chile 3% Others	Total 35: Chile (34); Uruguay (1)
	Doctorate in Anthropology/Universidad Católica del Norte, Universidad de Tarapacá	73% Chile 27% Others	Total 22: Chile (16); Chile and Argentina (3); Argentina (1); Bolivia (1); Bolivia and Chile (1)
	Doctorate in Political Sciences/Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile	54% Chile 46% Others	Total 13: Chile (7); Internacional (1); Argentina, Chile and Uruguay (1); Latin America (4)
	Doctorate in Sociology/Universidad Alberto Hurtado	92% Chile 8% Others	Total 38: Chile (35); Germany (1); Latin America (2)
	Doctorate in Social Sciences/Universidad de Chile	89% Chile 11% Others	Total 18: Chile (16); Chile and Mexico (1); Chile, Argentina and Uruguay (1)
	Doctorate in History/Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile	87% Chile 13% Others	Total 46: Chile (40); Peru (1); Chile and Peru (1); Chile and Colombia (1); Chile and China (1); Chile and Spain (1); Chile and Latin America (1)

Source: (Produced by the authors).

5. Final Considerations

The fact that studies on Latin America happen more often outside its borders suggests that there may be a lack of investment in specialized research centers focused on its study, or even an infant stage of academic and scientific knowledge in fields that could benefit from its research. The citation of Latin American authors between scientific production within the continent is still notably minimal when compared to citations of central countries' authors (removed for peer review), confirming that internal dialogues are still frail. The level of urban research is also unbalanced in Latin America—even when comparing five of the most populated countries, it is possible to observe a huge difference in terms of quantity and quality of post-graduate programs and scientific events.

Arenas of knowledge regarding urbanism and city planning are fragmented inside the continent, although they also remain constant, suggesting a stable academic scenario. Post-graduate programs exhibit a higher level of dialogue dynamics with Latin American counterparts, but those related to urban and regional planning/cities with high rankings are few. Despite moments and individual experiences that may indicate otherwise, observed results suggests that a solid academic community may not exist in Latin America, at least not one that is concerned with discussing common urban issues in this continent or, in other words, the Latin American city.

What remains is the difficult task of examining dialogue in particular and punctual examples, implying the need for a review of previously presented concepts of the circulation of ideas. If, at first, we are certain of how easily contemporary instruments allow the attainment and transfer of ideas, we may soon perceive that other agents and factors seem to weaken and transform them.

Taking into consideration that this study's selected countries are highly populated, and consequently face larger complexities in its urban issues, it is possible that the situation among the remaining countries of Latin America might be very similar to what was observed in our frame of analysis.

Lastly, it is important to highlight that vertical dialogues from central to peripheral places, as approached in this paper, seem to be paradoxically encouraged in recent years because of internationalization of our academic productions. The desired publication in journals of international visibility may subject researchers to central countries' models, according to interests of these global journals not located in Latin America; their content is primarily presented in languages not spoken in our continent. [Stren \(1998\)](#), when analyzing the comprehension of the city in developing countries, pointed to language limitations and the lack of resources given to research in these countries. According to him, researchers are directed to seek resources from international sources, which subjects them to a new kind of dependence and may shift topics of interest, analytical processes, or conclusions. As a result, we can point to financial resources as one important element that attracts researchers and their knowledge, but at the same time, imposes conditions that standardize academic production into their own models.

However, the main communication channels (extra-academic), such as those supported by national policies, social medias, and individual initiatives of hidden internationalization, can contribute to a reversion of that scenario. Further studies that go beyond or on alternative paths to that presented in this paper could approach the role of traditional and new communication channels by a Latin American academic community.

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